



A STUDY OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG FEMALE TEACHERS WORKING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN TEZPUR TOWN OF ASSAM

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ABSTRACT

“Occupational Stress” is an unavoidable phenomenon in human life in today's world of rapid industrialization and increasing urbanization. It is a psychophysical condition which affects an individual's productivity, effectiveness, personal health and quality of work. Teacher stress is a specific type of occupational stress. Teaching profession can be identified as a stressful occupation in this modern challenging world which can adversely affect the health of the teachers which in turn affects the students and the learning environment. In this respect, female school teachers usually faced lots of occupational stress particularly the married female teachers as they have to play multiple roles both at homes and schools. In this paper, attempts have been made to identify the main causes of occupational stress among the female teachers of secondary schools and the ways for preventing and minimizing the same.

KEYWORDS: Occupational stress, teaching profession, female teacher, secondary school.

1. INTRODUCTION

“OCCUPATIONAL STRESS”, an unpleasant psychophysical condition, is a common feature of this modern world where an individual fails to cope with the pressures in his/her job. It affects the personal health and working efficiency of the workers. Occupational stress can be seen in different field of works. In the recent days, the profession of teaching has become more challenging worldwide more particularly in the secondary level where the students enter the stage of adolescence and as such the occupational stress among the teachers has been increasing very rapidly. Variety of reasons are associated with teachers' occupational stress such as increased in work load, low income, lack of equipment, large class size, lack of opportunities for professional enhancement, managing students' behaviour etc. More often it is seen that the occupational stress level of female teachers especially among the married female teachers is larger than their male counterparts because the former have to perform multiple roles both at homes and schools. At homes, they have to perform the role of daughter-in-law, wife, mother, sister-in-law etc. and at the same time in the schools they have to play the role of a good sensitive teacher while educating their students. Therefore it is quite natural that they faced occupational stress which adversely affects both the teacher and taught. Thus, in this regard it is very essential to make attempts in order to minimize and prevent the main causes of occupational stress among the teachers for the desirable outcomes in the process of education.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the main causes of occupational stress among female secondary school teachers.
2. To find out the different stress management activities for reducing the occupational stress among the teachers.

3. METHODOLOGY-

3.1 METHOD OF THE PRESENT STUDY:

Descriptive survey method is used for the present study in order to observe the observant in their natural setting.

3.2 POPULATION:

The population of the present study comprises of 12 secondary schools of Tezpur Town including both government and private schools; both vernacular and English medium.

3.3 SAMPLE:

In this present study, 60 female secondary school teachers were taken as sample in a random manner.

3.4 TOOLS:

For the collection of data, a self structured questionnaire and interview are used for gaining information from the female teachers who are taken as sample.

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA-

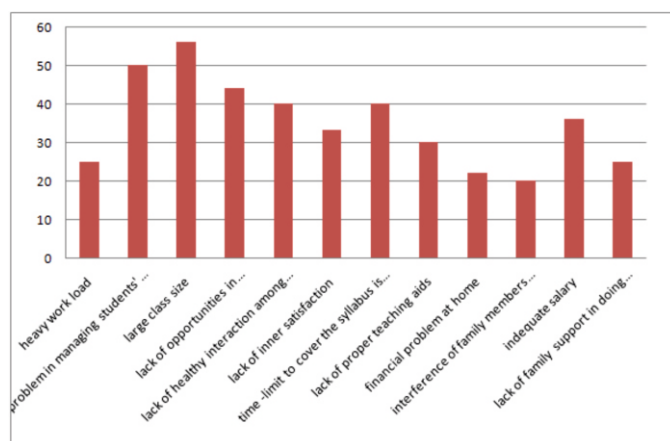
Both qualitative and quantitative analysis and interpretation of data are made in this study on the basis of the nature of the data and this have been presented below in the tabular form with their respective graphical representation.

TABLE-1

Different responses of the female secondary school teachers regarding the main causes of occupational stress in their profession:

TEACHERS' RESEPNSES REGARDING THE MAIN CAUSES OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS	NO. OF THE TEACHERS AGREED	% OF TEACHERS' POSITIVE RESPONSE
1. Heavy work load	25	41.67%
2. Problem in managing students' behaviour	50	83.33%
3. Large class size	56	93.33%
4. Lack of opportunities for professional enhancement	44	73.33%
5. Lack of healthy interaction among the staff members	40	66.67%
6. Lack of inner satisfaction	33	55%
7. Time limit to cover the syllabus is not enough	40	66.67%
8. Lack of sufficient teaching aids	30	50%
9. Financial problem at home	22	36.67%
10. Interference of family member into career	20	33.33%
11. Inadequate salary	36	60%
12. Lack of support from family members in doing house-hold chores	25	41.67%

GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF TABLE -1



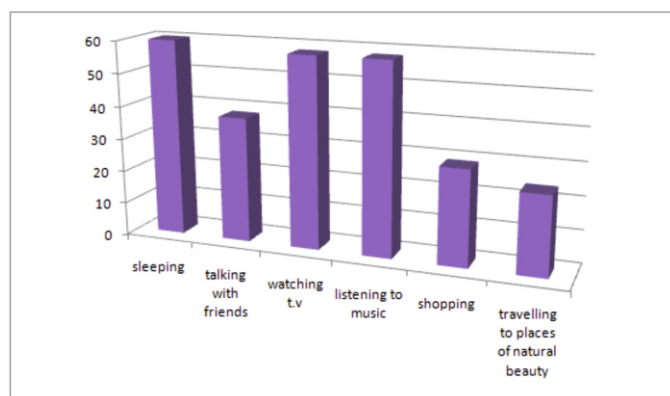
From table-1 and its graphical representation of the responses made by the female secondary school teachers it is seen that they suffer from the problem of occupational stress due to various reasons such as large class size (93.33%), prob-

lem in managing students behaviour (83.33%), lack of opportunities for professional enhancement(73.33%), lack of healthy interaction among staff members and shortage of time limit to cover the syllabus(66.67%),inadequate salary (60%), lack of inner satisfaction(55%),lack of proper teaching aids(50%), heavy work load and lack of family support in doing household chores(41.67%), financial problems at home(36.67%), family interference in career(33.33%).

TABLE-2
Different stress management activities as responded by the female secondary school teachers

DIFFERENT STRESS MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AS RESPONDED BY THE TEACHER	NO. POSITIVE RESEPNSE	% OF POSITIVE RESPONSE
1. Sleeping	60	100%
2. Talking with friends	38	63.33%
3. Watching tv	58	96.67%
4. Listening to music	58	96.67%
5. Shopping	29	48.33%
6. Travelling to places of natural beauty	24	40%

GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF TABLE-2:



From table -2 and its graphical representation it has been seen that all the selected female teachers used to sleep for getting relieve from the occupational stress, 96.67% of female teachers watch tv and listen to music as stress management activities, 63.33% talk with friends, 48.33% do shopping and 40% of them take travelling as stress management activities.

5. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

1. It is found that all the selected female teachers have reported that they have faced the problem of occupational stress in performing their duties due to different reasons.
2. The main causes of occupational stress as responded by the female teachers are-

- Large class size(93.33%)
- Problem in managing students' behaviour(83.33%)
- Lack of opportunities for professional enhancement(73.33%)
- Lack of healthy interaction among staffs and shortage of time to cover the syllabus(66.67%)
- Inadequate salary (60%)
- Lack of inner satisfaction(55%)
- Lack of proper teaching aids(50%)
- Heavy work load and lack of family support in doing household chores(41.67%)
- Financial problem at home (36.67%)
- Family interference into their career(33.33%)

3. The female teachers have also given their views regarding different stress management activities which are applied by them as follows-
 - Sleeping (100%)

- Watching t.v and listening to music(96.67%)
 - Talking with friends(63.33%)
 - Shopping (48.33%)
 - Travelling to places of natural beauty(40%)
4. Stress due to inadequate salary has been seen among the female teachers who work under privately run schools.
 5. Stress while managing students' behaviour in the classroom and large class size are seen to be the most common causes of teachers' stress in the secondary schools.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION-

From the present study it can be concluded that the profession of teaching has become quite challenging as the teachers experienced many kinds of problems while imparting education to the students as a result of which their occupational stress level appears to increase. Occupational stress has become an inescapable aspect of teaching. In one way or the other a teacher becomes the victim of occupational stress which is more common among the married female teachers. In this context, the following suggestions can be put forward for minimizing the problem of occupational stress among the female secondary school teachers to some extent-

- Schools should provide job security to the teachers.
- Organizing get together programmes and creating organizational climate in order to boost up the interaction among the teachers and authorities.
- Student teacher ratio in the classroom should be restricted(1:40)
- Counseling and stress management programmes must be started in schools.
- Recruitment of more teaching staffs to reduce the workload on teachers.
- Government and private secondary school management should jointly organized personality development courses, yoga courses and refresher courses for the teachers to enhance their personality traits and reducing occupational stress.
- Family support should be provided to the married female teachers. In this respect, husbands should be more sensitive in providing helping hand to their wives.
- Government should provide fund for enhancing the teaching aids so that the students can be motivated to attend the classes without any disturbance and the stress level of the teachers can be reduced.
- Education department should modify the structure of syllabus so that the teachers can complete the courses in the fix time-limit.
- Salary should be increased among the private school teachers according to their qualifications, experience and teaching competencies.

Thus, by being aware of the main causes of occupational stress and by proper implementation of the stress preventing strategies the level of occupational stress can be controlled to a large extent. In this respect, government, school authorities and also family members play a major role. Reduction of stress level among the teachers helps in the creation of pleasurable educational environment for all and also helps in accelerating the nation's progress by developing the future generation both as economic and social assets.

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